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ABSTRACT

A project was conducted to identify outcomes and procedures for measuring the occupational competency of students completing a coherent sequence of courses in career and technology education (C&TE) programs throughout Texas. The major objectives of phase 2 of the project were as follows: validate criteria for a career portfolio, integrate the career portfolio with general education, establish criteria for authentic assessment, and develop a career portfolio model. Data were obtained from the following: 4 group discussions with a total of 21 child care industry representatives and 11 horticulture industry representatives in Lubbock and Austin (Texas); input from a 10-member authentic assessment advisory committee that included project staff and representatives the Texas Education Agency; site visits to 3 child care education programs; and telephone interviews with teachers currently using authentic assessment in general education. The information obtained was analyzed and used to develop a career portfolio model that is designed for use in C&TE and that integrates occupation-specific skills, the workplace competencies identified in the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills report, and general education. (Contains 36 references. Appended are lists of focus group participants and employability skills and child care competencies and additional comments of the focus groups.) (MN)

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Final Report - Year Two

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Authentic Assessment for Occupational Competency for Career and Technology Education

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The project reported herein was performed through a contract with the Texas Education Agency under the provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational

Education Act (Public Law 101-392). Contractees undertaking such projects are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Texas Education Agency position or policy.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Authentic Assessment for Occupational Competency for Career and Technology Education Project was conducted cooperatively by faculty and staff in Agricultural Education and Communication and Home Economics Education at Texas Tech University and the Career and Technology staff of the Texas Education Agency, which served as the funding agency. The multi-year project focused on the integration of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) into Career and Technology classes. The project specifications included a Career and Technology portfolio model for all students completing a coherent sequence of courses. The purpose of the study for year two was to develop the portfolio model.

Phase Two of the project was conducted from July 1, 1994 through June 30, 1995. In accordance with The Master Plan for Technical Education (1993), this project addressed the integration of general education, career and technology education, and aspects of new technology in industry.

The Authentic Assessment Advisory Committee provided input regarding identification and design of authentic assessment procedures presently used in general education. Advisory committee members included Texas Education Agency specialists and representatives of business and industry. The committee included men and women of various cultural groups.

One advisory committee meeting of state leaders in general education areas was held in November, 1994. A summary of the child care focus groups was presented to the advisory committee members at this meeting. Committee members were asked to provide input concerning types of authentic assessment deemed useful for developing a career portfolio model that integrates general education and evaluates student performance on exit level competencies.

Objectives

The objectives of the project were to:

1) Validate criteria for the career portfolio;

2) Integrate a career portfolio with general education;

3) Establish criteria for authentic assessment;

4) Develop a career portfolio model.

Rationale

Whereas Career and Technology Education (C&TE) in Texas is directly responsible for the preparation of tomorrow's work force, it is imperative that C&TE prepare workers to meet the demands of the work place. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) (1991) of the United States

Department of Labor identified competencies and foundation skills common to all occupations. The identified competencies and foundation skills were designated as potential indicators of successful entry to the work place. In addition to the work place basics, there are occupation specific competencies and skills which impact successful employment.

To ensure that Texans entering the work force can meet the demands of the work place, it is important to assess occupational competencies for all students who complete a coherent sequence of courses in C&TE. The current project developed a model for a career portfolio that would be useful to business and industry in evaluating exit-level skills and competencies of students. The accomplishments of Year One included the identification of occupations, the validation of competencies, and the identification of procedures to assess those competencies. For Year Two, a career portfolio model was developed. Focus groups, individual interviews, and site visits provided input from business and industry representatives, specialists in general education, and classroom teachers.

Background and Review of Literature

"Authentic assessment" is known by the terms alternative assessment, direct assessment, and performance assessment (Herman, Aschbacher, & Winters, 1992; Worthen, 1993). As currently used in classrooms, authentic assessment is more often formative rather than summative evaluation. The trend is toward overcoming the challenges of authentic assessment to use in high stakes situations, such as graduation or grade placement.

This changing idea of assessment emphasizes learning and thinking processes. Authentic assessment would serve a clearly defined purpose known to both teachers and students with students taking an active role through self-evaluation (Moses, 1992; Stefonek, 1991).

Of the various types of authentic assessment, portfolios are the most versatile and most widely used. Portfolios permit students to highlight their best work in a flexible format. Portfolios are most often used in writing and math, although California is developing portfolios for use in Career & Technology courses and Wisconsin has Employability Skills Portfolios for students beginning in the tenth grade (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991; Valencia, 1990; Hanson, 1992; Nieto & Henderson, 1994; Stefonek, 1991).

Other types of authentic assessment are useful in classrooms. Filling out forms, marking score sheets, completing observation checklists, making tape or video recordings, solving math problems, writing short answers, completing graphs, making illustrations or diagrams, writing out the steps in a geometry proof, writing essays, discussing orally, participating in exhibitions, and performing experiments are other types of authentic assessment. When used correctly, authentic assessment can address the true accomplishments of the student.

Forms of Authentic Assessment

Portfolios

Portfolio assessment has been identified as one of the top three curriculum trends of the 90's (Phifer, 1995; Vavrus, 1990). The growing interest in portfolio assessment can be attributed to the general move toward assessment reform and an interest in performance evaluation (Nieto & Henderson, 1994). For the purposes of assessment as well as for presentation to prospective employers or advanced training institutions, the portfolio serves as a vehicle for organizing and presenting a collection of the student's work. More than a collection of documents, portfolios represent a purposeful selection of works that demonstrate knowledge or important skills (Far West Laboratory, 1993). The portfolio can replace, or at least supplement, conventional tests (Institute on Education and the Economy, 1993).

Herman, Aschbacher, & Winters (1992) described portfolios as collections of student work which are reviewed against criteria in order to judge an individual student or program. The criteria are dependent upon what is assessed. Portfolios can include evidence from many other forms of assessment, such as performance ratings and projects. The intention of most of those who use portfolios is that portfolios are not a single, contrived grade, but rather, should be seen as a range of many real and varied experiences that make up a true-to-life, complex evaluation (Touzel, 1993).

Student Projects

Projects allow students to investigate an in-depth area of interest. The project helps students gain, practice, and demonstrate knowledge and skills that are important upon entry into the work force.

An example of a student project program is the Career-Technical Assessment Project conducted by Far West Laboratory. The Career-Technical Assessment Project ensures that students master important standards that are meaningful to colleges and employers, that students have opportunities to network with professionals in their chosen field of study, and that students plan and document their accomplishments. The four step process includes planning, collecting evidence of progress, completing the final product, and presenting the information orally (Far West Laboratory, 1993).

Exhibitions

Exhibitions can take place at all levels of education. The most frequent type of exhibition is the senior recital, in which the student presents the results of an interdisciplinary inquiry to teachers and community leaders. The exhibition is a culmination of at least a semester of work. Goals are set, literature is reviewed, research is conducted, accomplished goals are recorded, and outcomes are evaluated in completion of the process. The final presentation takes place in front of community leaders and experts in the chosen area of study. Student growth and accomplishment are two criteria considered in the assessment process (McDonald, 1992).

Other types of exhibitions can occur. For example, classes of fifth grade students in Virginia work together to build a museum exhibit. Students learn the decision-making process while working on the exhibit. The specific displays

must be planned, constructed, and set up. Students create an exhibition catalogue with labeled information, recorded steps in the displays, and illustrated stories concerning the artifacts. During the hours that the exhibit is open to the public (parents), museum guides relate information concerning the display and see that the display is kept intact. Students increased their capacity to take on academic and problem-solving challenges through participation in the exhibition (Koetsch, Daniels, Goldman, & Leahy, 1994).

Oral Exams

Oral examinations represent one of the earliest forms of authentic assessment. Oral examinations are used most frequently in universities and in professional certification. Few documented uses of oral examinations are recorded at the secondary level. In order to investigate the bias associated with oral examinations, researchers have focused on appearance, non-verbal effects, body language, speed of speaking, background information about past achievement, and the contrast of performance related to the sequence of presentation. Results included that females were consistently rated lower by male teachers. Non-verbal effects and body language changed the final scores. More fluent speakers received higher marks. Information given to the judges concerning high past achievement resulted in a better assessment. A good performance was rated better if it followed a weak performance, while a weak performance following a good one received an even worse rating (Ingenkamp & Wolf, 1982; Seddon & Pedrose, 1990).

Performance Assessment

The Perkins Act of 1990 requires states to include a minimum of two outcome measures of student achievement in academic skills and work skill attainment. Performance assessment exists in individual programs; however, no statewide level of evaluation is in place ("The Test Makers," 1995). Although gaining in popularity, the use of performance assessment outcomes in high-stakes settings must be evaluated to ascertain that no negative effects are exhibited by special populations. Aids to performance assessment are well-defined scoring rubrics and ratings of portfolios (Linn, 1994).

Performance assessment must be evaluated on established validity, reliability, comparability, and fairness levels. The process of assessment should investigate pertinent skills and knowledge of students. A number of varied tests are needed so that the patterns of success and failure become apparent. The student should be advised of the criteria and standards of good performance before the performance assessment is conducted. The transfer of that knowledge into other similar situations is necessary. The scoring rubrics need to be richly detailed, but with enough flexibility so that they are not task specific. Performance assessment outcomes should be monitored for intended and unintended consequences of test interpretation and use (Messick, 1994). The standards for performance assessment should be developed according to a set of assessment dimensions that represent critical perspectives of the subject and serve as a framework for interpretation. Dimensions are lenses that analyze and interpret the performance and provides different perspectives for the judges (Delandshere & Petrosky, 1994).

Competencies

Competencies include general employability skills and occupation specific tasks. Competencies are identifiable skills or abilities that are necessary for successful performance in an occupation. Typically, competencies are identified by persons directly involved in the occupation in question. These persons may be from management, labor, and/or education. Other terms which are synonymous with competencies include duties and tasks (Lawver, et al., 1994).

Assessment of competencies was investigated by O'Neil, Allred, & Baker (1992). The fourteen step process begins with selecting a work environment and performing a job and task analysis. After a competency is selected, a component analysis is conducted. The other steps of the analysis are: create indicators for subcompetencies, classify indicators within a cognitive science taxonomy, create rapid prototypes of measures of indicators, test via specifications, select or develop final measures of indicators, select experimental/analytical design, run empirical studies, analyze statistically, use or create norms, report reliability/validity, and report on workforce readiness competency using multiple indicators. In order to better assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities of students, a five step progression of skills includes the levels of preparatory, work-ready, intermediate, advanced, and specialist (O'Neil, Allred, & Baker, 1992).

Standards

Standards are required in both Goals 2000: Educate America Act (1994) and Title I (formerly Chapter 1). Standards are concrete examples and explicit definitions of what students have to know and be able to do to demonstrate proficiency in skills and knowledge. States must establish clear standards for student achievement and refocus educational efforts around these standards. In addition, states are required to develop assessment to measure progress toward these standards and strategies to help students meet them (Gandal, 1995). Standards arise out of a complex interaction of curriculums, textbooks, exams, classroom practice, and student work. The challenge in the United States is to create a national agenda to raise performance of all students without creating a national exam or curriculum (O'Neil, 1995; Resnick & Nolan, 1995)

The standards must focus on academics and be grounded in core disciplines. They should be specific enough to assure the development of a common core curriculum, while simultaneously rigorous. Standards must be manageable, given time constraints, by focusing on essential student learning. Standards must evaluate performance by describing what students should know and be able to do and how well they must know and do it. By including performance levels such as "proficient," "advanced," and "expert," multiple standards set expectations to match different aspirations and achievements. A common standard for graduation should be established with higher standards for students who attain that initial level earlier. The standards should be clearly written but not dictate how the material should be taught (Gandal, 1995).

Schools must identify the format that the standards will take after analyzing all the documents and translating the information into a format and conceptual base compatible with the school. A distinction between content

standards, curriculum standards, and performance standards must be defined. The levels of standards must be addressed (Marzano & Kendall, 1995).

When children work toward standards-based assessments at every stage of their schooling, no one is left behind, and all students exceed their expectations. Standards represent a major school reform centered on improving the academic achievement of every child. In Colorado, the state system assesses performance of students at selected transition points and is sensitive to the variability in learning rates. Immediate feedback and identified subgroups have helped teachers monitor students' progress (Waters, Burger, & Burger, 1995).

Questions Addressed in the Project

Major questions examined in Phase Two of the Authentic Assessment project were:

1) What assessment evidence is meaningful to business and industry?

2) What should be in a career portfolio?

3) How can assessment of C&TE be integrated with general education content?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this project, the following operational definitions were used:

Authentic assessment - a form of evaluation that requires students to demonstrate proficiency in a variety of ways rather than select an answer from a ready-made list

Career portfolio - a documented history of a person's achievements, experiences, and performances as related to a specific career

Performance assessment - a form of evaluation that requires students to show their knowledge and skills in an active way

Focus group - a group interview led by a trained moderator designed to obtain specific qualitative information

Site visit - a brief visit to a school location to observe the type of authentic assessment conducted at that campus and to obtain information from the teachers involved in that type of assessment

Student projects - a student conducted learning activity that involves time and effort to reach specified desired goals, outcomes, and products

Exhibit/Exhibition - a process whereby a student determines a sequence of activities to reach a desired outcome; the end result, or presentation, of the process

Oral examination - an assessment technique in which a student is questioned before evaluators to determine knowledge and competence in the area of focus

Basic Assumptions

The following assumptions were made:

1) The definition of authentic assessment is inclusive of all authentic assessment techniques.
2) Employability skills as defined by SCANS are important to all areas of C&TE.
3) Students in C&TE will develop exit-level competencies by completing a coherent sequence of courses.
4) The process of authentic assessment will be implemented statewide.
5) Authentic assessment will involve collaboration between C&TE and general education.
6) Current curriculum will be adapted for authentic assessment.
7) C&TE teachers will receive in-service training on the use of authentic assessment.
8) A sample of business and industry representatives can provide useful information regarding assessment of skills needed by entry level employees.
9) Business and industry leaders will accept authentic assessment credentials/certifications.
10) Career portfolios will be useful to students seeking employment.

Limitations of the Project

The following limitations of the project were recognized:

1) The model developed was based on information from representatives of only two occupational areas, child care and horticulture.
2) Focus group participants may not be representative of their respective business or industry.
3) Input from representatives of general education was limited.
4) The model needs to be tested, evaluated, and revised before state-wide implementation.

Chapter II of this report describes the methods and procedures used in the research component of the Authentic Assessment Project. The topic of Chapter III is the analysis and interpretation of research results, with Chapter IV containing conclusions and the career portfolio model.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCEDURES

Focus groups are used to collect qualitative research data. "Focus groups, or group interviews, are useful in obtaining a particular kind of information that would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain using other methodological procedures" (Krueger, 1994). Successful focus group participants will discuss a range of topics that not only confirm the important issues that researchers already know, but will also introduce a set of issues that researchers had not anticipated (Merton, Friske, & Kendall, 1956). These interviews have been established as a method for obtaining "in-depth" qualitative information from a selected homogeneous group of people in a comfortable, casual setting.

Focus groups are group interviews conducted in a casual manner which nurtures openness among each participant. Each participant plays an active role in providing data for the research. Focus groups rely on interaction within the group, based upon topics that are supplied by the researcher and who typically takes the role of a moderator (Morgan, 1988).

A trained moderator facilitates the discussion aided by a rehearsed script containing a set of previously developed questions and with minimal participation in the discussion. The moderator may deviate from exact wording of the questions to accommodate the flow and probing of discussion, so long as the main ideas are revealed.

Selection of Focus Group Participants

Focus groups were comprised of professionals in child care and horticulture. All participants were responsible for making hiring decisions.

Child Care

Focus group members were selected from professionals in child care by contacting the regional National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) representatives in Lubbock and Austin. These persons provided a list of members and their telephone numbers. Selected NAEYC members were contacted and invited to attend the focus group. If a contacted person could not attend, that person was asked to give the name and telephone number of another person who might be interested in attending the focus group.

Twelve of fourteen participants attended the Lubbock session. Nine of twelve attended the Austin focus group. Confirmation was provided by mail. A reminder telephone call was made the day before the focus group. Participation acknowledgment and thanks were mailed to each member the day after the focus group was held.

Horticulture

Participants for focus group I were selected from the landscaping section of the South Plains Area-Wide Telephone Directory (1994). Group I participants were contacted by telephone and invited to attend the focus group held in

Lubbock. During the telephone call, a brief description of the topic was given and then their availability for the given date was asked. The researcher continued this process until 12 participants were identified. Initial participants were selected from a membership directory (Texas Association of Nurserymen, 1994). Other participants were chosen by nomination of the initial participants. A week prior to the focus group session, a letter was sent to each participant, giving the formalities of the focus group being conducted. A telephone call was made the day before the focus group session for confirmation and to ensure that no changes had been made on the participants' part. Twelve participants were invited, and six attended.

Upon receiving the membership directory (Texas Association of Nurserymen, 1994), which was not available to researchers before the selection of focus group I, twenty participants located in Austin, Texas, were identified. A letter of invitation and a brief explanation of the project were mailed March 1, 1995. Approximately one week following the mailing, a telephone call was made to each invited participant for confirmation. Eleven Group II participants confirmed, and five attended the focus group held in Austin.

Focus Group Questions and Procedures

Questions delivered to the focus groups were derived from a panel of experts, based on suggestions from Krueger (1994). The panel consisted of researchers with expertise in focus groups procedures and an understanding of the information needed from the participants. The questions were carefully and purposely developed to meet the objectives of the study. A time constraint of one and one half to two hours (including lunch) was a factor in determining the number of questions asked. Questions from the Child Care focus groups and Horticulture focus groups varied slightly in order to meet each of the specialized needs. Pilot focus group sessions were utilized to train the moderators and refine the questions for clarity and effectiveness.

The moderator assured participants of no right or wrong answers and encouraged all present to participate. Attention was centered on the focus group topic: "Assessing child care assistants/aides, or personnel working toward CDA requirements, for entry-level positions," and "Assessing horticultural competencies/qualifications of entry-level employees."

Group member introductions included name, work place and position or services their company offered. A listing of all focus group participants can be found in Appendix A.

The following questions were asked.

1. How do you advertise job openings or solicit applications for entry-level employees?
2. What is your written application process for entry-level applicants?
3. What is your interview process for entry-level applicants?
4. We are going to talk about three aspects of skills and knowledge that an entry-level applicant should have. They are personal characteristics, basic employability skills, and technical, or job-specific, skills. What personal characteristics do you look for in an entry-level applicant?
5. What basic employability skills do you look for in an applicant?

6. What technical, or job specific, skills do you look for in an applicant?
7. How do you evaluate these skills during the application and interview process?
8. Ideally, what evidence could help you form a decision about hiring the applicant?
   >If portfolio is mentioned: What do you mean by portfolio? What would you expect to be included?
   >If portfolio not mentioned: Scenario (Child Care): You have had a problem keeping an entry-level position filled. During interviews you realize that your next applicant is a high school graduate. This particular student, though, has brought a portfolio to demonstrate high school work. Before looking into the portfolio, what would you expect it to contain?
   >If portfolio not mentioned: (Horticulture):Has anyone used a career portfolio to make a hiring decision? If yes, please explain. If no, give definition. Portfolio=This is an alternative technique which is being examined by educators to help prepare students for a more competitive job force. A portfolio can be defined as a method for allowing student to demonstrate their knowledge and skills they have acquired over time.
9. Would the applicant with a career portfolio have an advantage over and applicant without a portfolio? What are the advantages?
   >(Child Care Only) Pause to pass out competency list and explain that we will focus on the information next.< (See Appendix B)
10. You received a list of competencies that was identified earlier this year by a group of professionals like yourself. How could these competencies be represented in a career portfolio? Let's start with employability, then the job specific area.
11. What other evidence of an applicant's capabilities should be shown in the portfolio?
12. In some places certificates of mastery are earned by high school students upon completion of courses. How useful would this be for you? Why or why not? Workshop certificates? Contests?
13. Based on what we've discussed so far, which 2-3 items would you consider most important in a career portfolio? (Ask each person.)

Advisory Committee

The advisory committee meeting was held in Austin, Texas, on November 15, 1994. Ten members attended including representatives of academic education at TEA, Career & Technology leaders at TEA, and project staff members. Advisory Committee members were:

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Home Economics
Senior Director, TEA

Dorris Boone
Social Studies
Texas Education Agency

Jeanne Rollins
Fine Arts
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Cynthia Levinson
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Following a preliminary report from the child care focus groups, members were encouraged to discuss Authentic Assessment activities at the state level. One comment was that resources and materials must be in place before school districts were held accountable for results. In the Fine Arts area, portfolios hold a collection of individual student's work produced over time; however, critiques and daily evaluations were unacceptable to parents resulting in rubrics for grading. Student involvement in the portfolio item selection process was noted with growth beginning slowly and gradually increasing. In writing portfolios, cost, reliability, and validity of scoring are concerns. Students could select audio tapes, video tapes, and projects for Authentic Assessment. The optimum end result would be at graduation, for students to present the portfolio, that represents the range and depth of knowledge, to a panel of judges, who pose a question to solve.

The New Standards Pilot Assessment for social studies was cited as an example. The rubric developed for the New Standards Assessment could lead the assessment that would strengthen developmentally appropriate learning. Students would work with diversity in group members and in content areas to develop breadth and depth of knowledge. The assessment would be authentic since the student would choose the project based on interests. Teachers would provide the time and support needed to develop the project. Group selection would determine the end result.

The model would provide another avenue for teachers to model thinking processes. The content would be placed in the appropriate context for learning with the need to integrate all learning.

An in-service training suggestion included the use of teachers to train others. In order to provide a quality product, feedback would occur to evaluate and revise the portfolio.

Site Visits

Site visits were conducted to obtain information from child care teachers who are involved in authentic assessment. The following questions were asked:

1. What types of authentic assessment are being used currently in home economics and other career and technology education programs?

2. How does authentic assessment impact student achievement?
3. What has been the response of teachers, students, parents, administrators, policy makers, and others to authentic assessment?
4. How can authentic assessment in career and technology education courses be integrated with similar assessment in general education courses?
5. What problems and frustrations have schools and teachers experienced in using authentic assessment tools?
6. What are the in-service needs of teachers as they implement authentic assessment?
7. What else might contribute to the design of a statewide model for career and technology education?

Garland

Two staff members met with the Garland ISD home economics director and seven teachers in related areas of Child Care on December 9, 1994. Implementation of Authentic Assessment was discussed.

Suggestions for the Career Portfolio included child care supervisor evaluations, letter of recommendations, FHA projects, integration with Texas Assessment of Academic Skills and Academic Excellence Indicator System, and results-based monitoring. A student portfolio is used as proof of training and accomplishment with 2+2 Tech Prep Early Childhood Professions placement at the junior college level.

One standardized certificate was suggested with space for noting ability levels. An advisory board composed of business & industry representatives and educators would view and review the portfolio in an on-going process.

Staff development would include pre-and in-service teachers at the secondary and post secondary levels with additional training for professionals in business & industry. Local, regional, and state delivery systems would be utilized.

Plano

A second site visit was conducted by two project staff members at Plano Senior High School on December 13, 1994. The two teachers of Child Care for Plano ISD were present.

Since students develop portfolios at the elementary level in Plano ISD, the concept is a familiar one. Although no formal portfolio is collected as a part of the Child Care course, students are encouraged to keep materials produced in the class. Activities include flannel board stories, pictures, dramatic play short stories, activities for children of all ages, fingerplays, folder games, a Piaget activity that the student plans and carries out, and an Erickson project that includes personal information and a family picture history. Students use the writing labs on campus to produce papers.

Students rotate through four sites at nine week intervals. One rotation includes an on-site pre-school. Developmentally appropriate lesson plans and learning centers are required of the student at each site. Students plan and conduct projects, use resources and prepare bulletin boards. Each student must be video taped leading a group session, supervising children, and participating in an interview situation.

Training mentioned by these teachers included the need to inform parents and students about the course and outcomes. Interested students are encouraged to become further qualified by studying at the university level.

Lubbock

Two project staff visited Mackenzie Junior High in Lubbock on February 21, 1995. A team of teachers representing language arts, science, math, and social studies content areas work with assigned students to develop four major themes associate with "Forces of Power." At the end of nine weeks, each student presents a focused informational product that deals with the theme. Parents are informed about the program via letter and are encouraged to support the program by helping with information acquisition or presentation set-up. Rubrics have been developed to evaluate the presentation and are used as guidelines at the beginning of the study. Self, peer, and teacher evaluation compose the weighted student scores.

Telephone Interviews

To supplement the information obtained through site visits, telephone interviews were conducted with teachers who are using authentic assessment in general education. Two interviews are described below.

Frenship Intermediate School

Contact was made with a teacher at Frenship Intermediate School on February 16, 1995. The school uses academic teaming in the fifth and sixth grades for an interdisciplinary curriculum. This particular teacher teaches language arts and writing. A portfolio is assembled so that the overall picture of a student's ability is represented. The student selects the items that go into the portfolio. At the end of each grading period, the teacher and student meet for a conference concerning the eight or more items that have been added to the portfolio during that period of time. The student is required to do a self-evaluation. The teacher commented that the quality of work has improved, possibly because the student has a choice in the items represented in the portfolio.

The teacher rotates students through learning centers so that the student produces the items for the portfolio. Some items that can be included are a video or tape recording of an oral book report or interview, an application, papers using quotation marks, and work opportunities such as the mail service or banking service at that school. Photographs usually have a commentary that accompanies them.

Frenship High School

Students in the Frenship High School gifted program use exhibitions to increase learning, depth, and complexity in subject matter. Students from grades 9 to 12 are combined into blended work groups. Students may choose to do independent, team, or group work in five interdisciplinary areas. The exhibitions are scheduled during the last two six weeks of school and encourage problem solving and group work. The five areas of study include language arts,

social studies, math, science, and fine arts and are headed by a subject matter facilitator. Each facilitator has no more than nine students to supervise. Students were given the objectives of each area of study, although interdisciplinary study is expected. The tasks include investigation, research and creation in the selected subject matter focus area. Language arts tasks center around emotions. Social studies has a broad focus. Math looks at game theory. Science zeros in on sports medicine. Fine arts bases the study on history. The theme for this year is "Change has a ripple effect."

In addition to keeping each student on task, the facilitator arranges a series of exhibition opportunities for the student. The first exhibition is critiqued by an outside judge, a peer knowledgeable in the subject area, and a facilitator from another subject area. The second exhibition will consist of a new panel. The final exhibition is at the end of the school year.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

After transcripts were made of each focus group session, the information was categorized. Similarities and differences in the information was noted. Similar comments were combined into overall themes and child care or horticulture themes.

Focus Groups

Child Care

The first Child Care focus group was held in Lubbock, Texas, on October 25, 1994. Twelve child care directors attended representing three sizes of child care facilities. Nine directors had facilities serving 49 to 120 children with eight to 25 workers. One director served 200 children with 55 workers. Two directors represented a multiple site facility with 476 children and 91 workers.

The second focus group was held in Austin, Texas, on November 15, 1994. Nine directors attended representing four sizes of facilities. Five directors administer facilities serving 38 to 112 children with five to twelve workers. Two directors served 192 to 212 children with 28 to 35 workers. One facility was licensed for 350 children and 70 workers. A six site facility served 1000 child with 150 workers.

Participants in both focus groups agreed upon several items that could be included in a career portfolio. The resume should include general information plus hobbies, interests, membership in organizations, volunteer and work experience, and long term career goals. Support documents could include the diploma; transcripts; a biographical sketch; a self-evaluation of personal strengths and weaknesses; a philosophy of early childhood education; continuing education hours including documentation toward completion of the Child Development Associate; observations of children; reference letters from supervisors, co-workers and parents; an evaluation of children's literature; and workshop and safety certificates. Lesson plans should include supporting materials, such as teacher-made visuals and manipulatives. Scenario question responses and evaluation instruments used for appraisals or by supervising teacher could also be included. Projects, photos, and videos would give potential employers an idea of the skills of the applicant.

Horticulture

Group I participants were horticultural representatives from a city population of under 200,000. Services provided by the companies were: residential landscaping, retail sales, irrigation, installations, maintenance, landscape nursery, trees, stump grinding, tree pruning, and bed work. This focus group was held on January 26, 1995 in Lubbock.

Group II participants represented horticultural companies serving a large metropolitan area of over 200,000. The number of employees were larger in Group II than Group I. The services provided were: commercial landscape construction and maintenance, retail and co-sale distribution with lawn, garden

and agricultural products, ornamental plants, landscape design, irrigation, sales and service, and wholesale growers of native and premium plant materials. Group II participants had no previous agricultural experience before entering the horticultural industry. This focus group was held in Austin on March 23, 1995.

Agreement in both focus groups included five areas. The application process should include current references. Personal qualities considered important were appearance, confidence, and interest. Training skills could be acquired on the job. The performance assessment setting could be in the warehouse or in the field. Certificates of mastery were desirable with industry set standards.

Overall Themes

Responses were analyzed, and themes were identified in each of the nine categories represented in the focus group questions. The nine categories were: (1) application solicitation; (2) application/interview process; (3) personal qualities; (4) technical/job-specific skills; (5) evaluation of skills during the hiring process; (6) portfolio contents; (7) use of certificates of mastery; (8) effects of portfolios; and (9) most important items to include in a portfolio.

All four focus groups agreed in their responses for four categories. The categories are application solicitation, personal qualities, effects of portfolios, and most important items to include in a portfolio. The summary of responses for each category is listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
Themes Common to Child Care and Horticulture Focus Groups

Categories	Participant Comments
Application Solicitation	Newspaper ads Flyers to Texas Employment Commission Contact with university/college programs Recommendations by others
Personal Qualities	Communication skills Dependable Willing to learn, bright, shows interest Physically able
Effects of Portfolios	Would not be *the* determining factor Would be impressive Would help to screen applicants
Most Important Items to Include	Resume Previous jobs listing

in a Portfolio	Certificates of mastery Workshop certificates

Child Care Themes

The participants of the two child care focus groups agreed in their responses for in seven categories. The categories are the application/interview process, personal qualities, technical or job-specific skills, evaluation of skills during the hiring process, portfolio contents, the effects of portfolios, and most important items to include in a portfolio. See Table 3.2.

Table 3.2
Themes Unique to Child Care Focus Groups

Categories	Participant Comments
Application/ Interview Process	Open-ended scenario questions (age specific, conflict) Input from others or second interview Classroom volunteer or substitute time
Personal Qualities	Read and write in English Enjoy reading for pleasure Solve problems Accept constructive criticism Be punctual Be confidential Be flexible Express enthusiasm Be creative
Technical, Job-Specific Skills	Holds high school diploma or GED Works with children and adults from diverse backgrounds Adapts to facility procedures Negotiates with parents concerning children Appreciation, knowledge, value, respect, regard, affection, love, interest, delight, caring, and reverence for children Basic knowledge of child development Knowledge of developmental stages of children Knowledge of developmentally appropriate activities Formal training with children Ability to implement child-directed activities Healthy lifestyle Awareness of safety issues concerning children

Evaluation of Skills During Hiring Process	The written observations of a selected classroom The interaction as a volunteer or substitute
Portfolio Contents	High school diploma Resume Work toward Child Development Associate Certificate Work toward Associate degree Reference letters with current names and numbers Workshop certificates Safety certificates Lesson plans Projects Photographs Hobbies Children's literature selections Evidence of personal development toward being a positive role model
Effects of Portfolios	Must match applicant to child care program Might shorten induction process Provides added security for a good match with program
Most Important Items to Include in a Portfolio	Transcripts Continuing education hours References with names and addresses Letters from co-workers Experience in working with children Evaluation tools used by supervisors, teacher, and employers Classroom interaction evaluation by supervisor Statement of philosophy of early childhood education Strengths and weaknesses Biographical sketch

Other responses by individuals in the child care focus groups are listed in Appendix C. These suggestions could be used in designing a career portfolio that is localized to the needs of the community.

Horticulture Themes

The participants of the two horticulture focus groups agreed on items in five categories. The categories are application/interview process, personal qualities, technical/job-specific skills, evaluation of skills during hiring process, and use of certificates of mastery. Responses to these categories are summarized in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3
Themes Unique to Horticulture Focus Groups

Categories	Participant Comments
Application/ Interview Process	Standard applications: readable, completed, references
Personal Qualities	Neat appearance, clean cut, no long hair Self presentation Shows interest in company, attentive
Technical, Job-Specific Skills	Formal training provided No experience required No prior knowledge needed; information is readily available and abundant
Evaluation of Skills During Hiring Process	Performance tasks are given in the warehouse or field
Use of Certificates of Mastery	Texas Certified Nurserymen (TCN) is beneficial Should seek assistance from industry to set standards

Other responses by individuals in the horticulture focus groups, listed in Appendix D, could be used in designing a career portfolio that is localized to the needs of the community.

Suggestions for Collaboration with General Education

Given that opportunities for collaboration between C&TE and general education teachers varies in schools across Texas, such efforts will likely need to be initiated by Career and Technology teachers at each individual campus. The type and amount of collaboration should be decided at the local level. Integration is encouraged so that students can apply classroom learning to skills needed in the work place.

Collaboration might be possible with several general education areas. For example, the completion of written papers and forms in English parallel the philosophy of early childhood education and application skills in C&TE. Math skills are applied in plantings per square foot in horticulture and purchasing resources in child care. Social studies content is useful in planning for cultural diversity in learning centers and in plant selections in social environments. Science skills permeate horticulture and are topics of learning center content areas in child care. Collaboration between C&TE and general education teachers can enhance students' learning and eliminate duplication of effort.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the focus groups, site visits, telephone interviews, and input of the Advisory Committee, along with the identification of occupation specific competencies in Phase One of the project, provided a basis for the development of a career portfolio model for use in Career and Technology Education. See Figure 1. The model is based on the following conclusions:

(1) A career portfolio is an appropriate tool for authentically assessing the skills of students completing a coherent sequence of courses in C&TE.

(2) A career portfolio will be useful to potential employers of C&TE graduates, especially during the screening process.

(3) A career portfolio for C&TE students should provide evidence of both general employability skills, as described in SCANS, and occupation-specific skills.

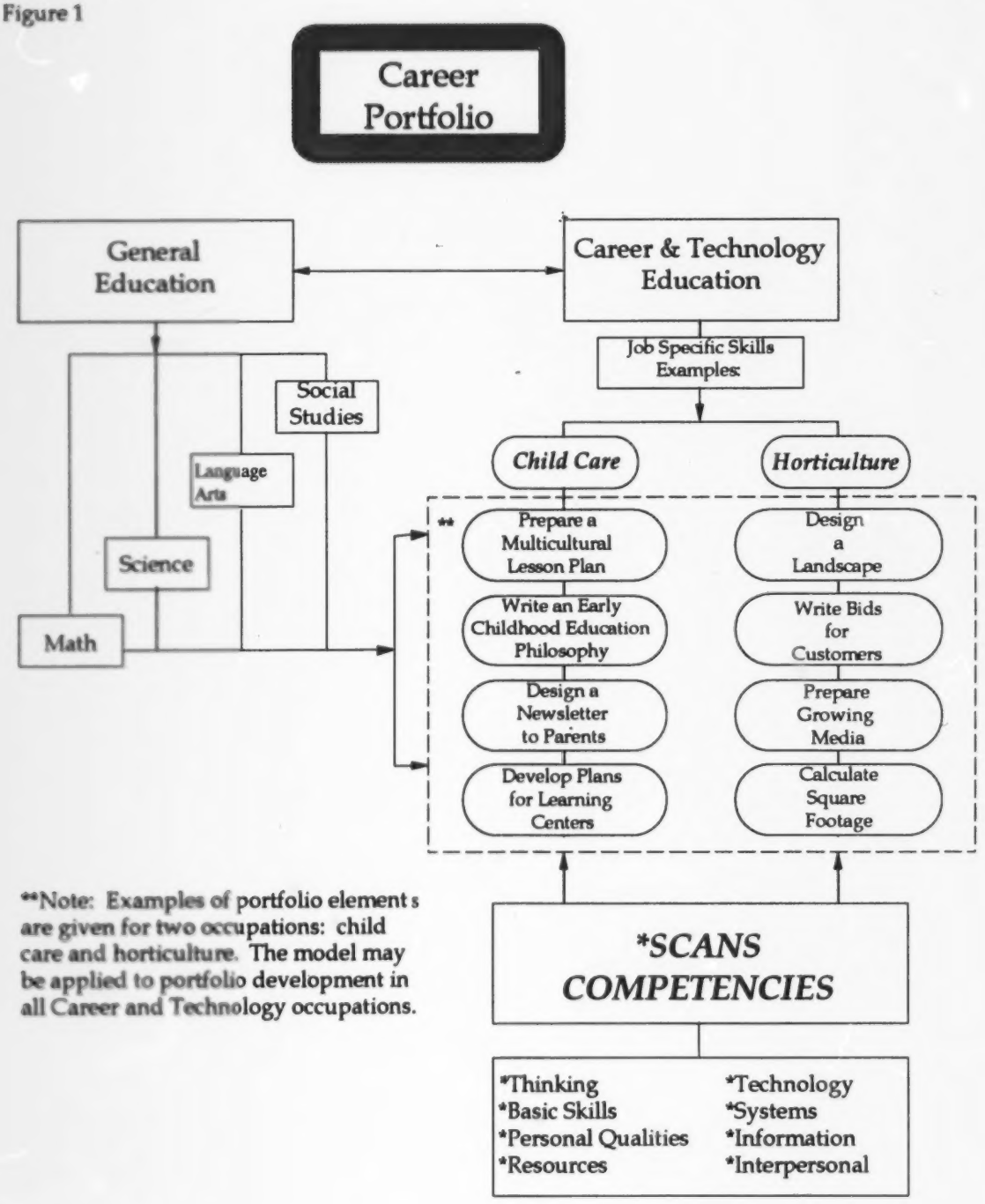
(4) A career portfolio should involve collaboration between C&TE and general education. Given that there is no state-wide plan for such collaboration, it likely would take place primarily at the local level.

(5) A career portfolio should represent a purposeful selection of the student's work which demonstrates specific knowledge and skills.

(6) Specific items which might be included in a career portfolio include resume, transcript, certificates of mastery, letters of reference, statement of philosophy, evidence of awards and honors, evaluations from teachers and training supervisors, and examples of projects and assignments.

The model described in the following pages integrates occupation-specific skills, SCANS, and general education. Examples of portfolio items are given for child care and horticulture occupations. The model may be applied to other C&TE occupational areas by modifying the items suggested for child care and horticulture or by substituting other items. Consultation with industry representatives at the local level will assist C&TE teachers in identifying appropriate items for inclusion in a career portfolio that will best demonstrate students' skills.

Figure 1



**Note: Examples of portfolio element s are given for two occupations: child care and horticulture. The model may be applied to portfolio development in all Career and Technology occupations.

Career Portfolio Model

The career portfolio model shown in Figure 1 is based on the general employability skills identified in SCANS (1991). These include three foundation skills (basic skills, thinking skills, personal qualities) and five workplace competencies (technology, resources, systems, information, and interpersonal skills). The items suggested for inclusion in the portfolio represent the integration of SCANS within the occupational area. Collaboration with general education is accomplished by incorporating math, science, language arts, and/or social studies, in the development of the portfolio items.

The suggested portfolio items are intended as examples only. Teachers and students should select items for inclusion in the portfolio which demonstrate mastery of skills needed for entry into the occupation. The model is applicable for use with all C&TE occupational areas. Specific portfolio items will differ across occupations, but all should represent the integration of SCANS and collaboration with general education.

Teachers are encouraged to seek input from local industry representatives to determine what specific evidence might be included in career portfolios to best demonstrate students' skills. Industry representatives also can be involved in the evaluation of portfolios. Individual portfolios should represent the student's best work, and the student should have some choice in the selection of items to be included.

Recommendations for Portfolio Support Materials

Portfolios are collections of work compiled by students over time that provide evidence of their attainment of skills. Careful selection of documents can demonstrate general education skills, general employability skills (SCANS), and skills specifically related to a chosen occupational area. Portfolios represent one type of authentic assessment that can help students demonstrate to future employers what they have accomplished in school and are becoming an established means of evaluation in many Texas school.

There are numerous documents students might include in their portfolios. Encourage your students to select a variety of assignments from language arts, science, mathematics, social studies, as well as samples of work done in career and technology classes. You may be able to collaborate with teachers in other areas in the actual development of career portfolios. Appropriate portfolio documents also could include school records (transcripts), awards and honors, and personal journals.

Frameworks for a number of specific documents that could be included in a career portfolio for entry-level child care workers are described in this report. These are:

* Resume
* Scenarios of Child Care Situations
* Early Childhood Education Philosophy
* Lesson Plans
* Learning Center Schedule/Plan
* Suggestions for Newsletter to Parents

The **Resume Format** (Document A) identifies information students need to include in a resume. A resume can be used to summarize occupation specific job skills, SCANS, work experience, and career goals. As students develop resumes they can demonstrate basic skills, use technology and information skills, and apply what they have learned in language arts. Although no specific style or format is suggested, teachers should help students select a format which highlights their strengths. A simple, straight-forward format is preferred. Students should be encouraged to be as inclusive as possible in preparing the resume. BE SURE that the resume is technically correct, that is, be certain that students use correct spelling and grammar.

Scenarios (Document B) provide students an opportunity to demonstrate how they would respond to hypothetical situations in child care environments. The two examples focus on conflict resolution and child guidance. Other scenarios could be written on a variety of topics such as parent communication and co-worker communication. An analysis of a hypothetical situation provides evidence of a number of SCANS Foundation Skills including problem solving, decision making, reasoning, responsibility, self-management, and leadership. Occupation specific knowledge and procedures also would be evident in the student's response to the situation presented. The written response is appropriate for a portfolio, although you may want students to provide an oral explanation as well. Not only are responses to hypothetical situations an outstanding part of portfolios, but this activity also prepares the students for future interviews. Many employers utilize scenarios to determine how potential employees react to typical situations that child care providers might face in a work environment.

The **Early Childhood Education Philosophy** (Document C) is an example of a document that could be prepared in collaboration with language arts and computer technology teachers in your school. The final product can provide evidence of proficiency in the three SCANS Foundation Skills (basic skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities) and demonstrate the student's understanding of occupation specific information. A philosophy statement encourages students to examine who they are and what they believe. Writing a philosophy implies reflection, and the final product will require writing, editing, and re-writing. Encourage students to use the questions provided to articulate their overall vision of working in the early childhood education field. This may be the first time students have been assigned a philosophy paper so many will need special guidance and encouragement. In addition to classroom discussions, some students may want to have a personal interview with a child care professional as they prepare their philosophy statements.

Completion of **Lesson Plans** (Document D) demonstrates a student's ability to plan educational classroom activities. In writing lesson plans students will need to consider what information to present, identify available resources, and work within the system to create a positive learning environment for the children. The Lesson Plan Framework provides a list of the information that should be included. The amount of detail that is needed should be determined by the individual teachers. Teachers may want to modify the lesson plan format to reflect style/format used in a particular school.

The planning of **Learning Centers** (Document E) provides prospective employers with evidence of students' understanding of the ways children learn and the use of a variety of information. Although a number of specific skills related to early childhood education would be highlighted, many general employability skills, such as thinking skills, would be applied when preparing the Learning Center schedule. Planning and scheduling learning centers also requires that students make interdisciplinary connections with language arts, social studies, science, math, and art. Utilizing the suggested format to plan a week's activities, students would demonstrate their creativity by selecting a theme and weaving the theme into a number of different areas for the children.

Basic writing skills and the use of technology are two of the SCANS categories that can be demonstrated in a **Newsletter for Parents** (Document F). There is a list of suggestions for articles that could be included in a newsletter. As part of a class project, students might provide evidence of their creativity and their ability to participate as members of a team as they write, edit, design, layout, and print a newsletter. A copy of a sample newsletter would make an excellent addition to a Career Portfolio. Encourage the students to highlight specific newsletter components for which they were responsible.

Document A

RESUME FRAMEWORK

Instructions to Student: A resume is used to summarize your job skills, work experiences, and career goals. It describes your qualifications to a potential employer. The items listed below are examples of the information you need to include in your resume. Be sure that the information on your resume is accurate and that you use correct spelling and grammar.

Date

Name

Address

Phone Number

EDUCATION:

WORK EXPERIENCE:

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:

AWARDS:

HONORS:

ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP:

LEADERSHIP:

INTERESTS:

HOBBIES:

CAREER GOALS:

REFERENCES NAMES & ADDRESSES:

SCANS: Basic Skills, Information, Personal Qualities, Technology

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Language Arts, Computer Technology

Document B.I

SCENARIO I

Instructions to Student: A scenario gives you an opportunity to respond to a hypothetical situation. The scenario described below represents a situation which you might have as you care for children. Scenario I relates to resolving conflict. Explain in writing how you might handle each situation. Your teacher may want you to share your explanation orally.

SCENARIO I: Resolving Conflict

Joey, age 15 months, and Isaac, age 14 months, were playing in the sandbox. They were content to play with separate toys--scoops, trucks, cars, molds, sieves, pails, shovels--until Joey placed the blue funnel against Isaac's foot. Isaac noticed the funnel and picked it up to use it to bury his truck. Joey dropped his car and reached for the funnel. He shouted "No! Mine!" He crawled into Isaac's lap reaching for the funnel. Isaac held the funnel away from Joey. Joey started crying. Joey grabbed Isaac's free hand and bit Isaac. Isaac dropped the funnel, kicked his feet, started crying, and held his arm where Joey left teeth marks.

1. What is the major conflict?
2. How could the conflict be avoided or prevented?
3. How would you handle the situation regarding Joey? Isaac?
4. What would you report to the teacher in charge?
5. The teacher gave you an accident form to fill out. What would you record?
6. What would you do if the bite broke the skin, and Isaac was bleeding?
7. What would you say to the parent's of both boys?
8. What health issues are implicated?

SCANS: Interpersonal, Personal Qualities, Systems, Thinking Skills

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Language Arts, Health

Document B.II

SCENARIO II

Instructions to Student: A scenario gives you an opportunity to respond to a hypothetical situation. The scenario described below represents a situation which you might have as you care for children. Scenario II focuses on child guidance. Explain in writing how you might handle each situation. Your teacher may want you to share your explanation orally.

SCENARIO II: Guidance

Shandra is 2 1/2 years old. During group movement time to music, she participates and follows each movement change. While you are waiting for the next song to begin, Shandra crawls on the work table, stands up, and begins repeating the movement of the elephant swinging its trunk. Before the present movement activity, not more than 15 minutes ago, you had removed Shandra from on top of the table.

1. What do you do and say now?
2. Why is Shandra on the table?
3. Why is Shandra repeating an activity that you just stopped her from doing?
4. What could you encourage her to do?
5. What could you suggest to change the experience so that Shandra does not have to wait too long?
5. What would you report to the teacher in charge?
6. What would you report to Shandra's parents?

SCANS: Interpersonal Skills, Personal Qualities, Thinking Skills

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Language Arts

Document C

PHILOSOPHY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GUIDELINES

Instructions to Student: A philosophy is a statement of your beliefs about early childhood education. Use the questions listed below to prepare your philosophy statement. You may want to talk to someone who works with young children to help you clarify your own view. As you write your philosophy, consider the following questions:

1. What is you definition of early childhood education?

2. How would you describe an environment that supports child growth and development?

3. How would you ensure a safe environment for young children?

4. What are your views on child guidance and discipline?

5. How would you include children with special needs and help them develop their potential?

6. What are appropriate learning activities for young children?

7. How could you communicate effectively with parents to build positive relationships with them?

8. How would you demonstrate ethical behavior in working with young children and their parents?

SCANS: Basic Skills, Information, Personal Qualities, Systems, Thinking Skills

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Language Arts, Computer Technology

Document D

LESSON PLAN FRAMEWORK

Instructions to Student: Use the outline given below (or another format provided by your teacher) to develop a lesson plan for use in an educational program for young children.

Date

Time

Age Group

Size of Group

Monthly Theme

Weekly Topic

Subject for Today

Purpose

Materials Needed

Equipment Needed

Introduction/Transition into Activity

Learning Experience/Activity

Closing/Transition Out of Activity

Plan for Reinforcement Later in the Day

Lesson Evaluation & Reflection

Plans for Activity Follow-up:
(e.g. need for similar activities and skills development)

SCANS: Information, Resources, Systems, Thinking Skills

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Social Studies, Science, Language Arts, Math, Psychology, Art

Document E

PLAN FOR LEARNING CENTERS

Instructions to Student: Using the example given below as a guide, develop a weekly plan for learning centers. Select a them for the week and then describe activities related to the theme. Not all centers will be used everyday.

Date **April 22-26, 1996** Theme **Circus** Age Group **4 yr olds**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Science	Identify pictures of circus animals.	Look at plaster footprints. Make footprints in water, sand, or clay.	Prepare beef jerky.	Prepare & eat nutritious peanut butter snacks.	View video of performing dogs. Set up balance beam for children to walk across.
Literary	Provide picture books of circus animals.	Read about circus animals' footprints.	Read about meat-eating animals.	Read about elephants.	
Art					
Social Studies					
Math					
House-keeping				Eat beef jerky.	
Nature					
Outdoor					
Other:					

Plans for Activity Follow-up:

SCANS: Basic Skills, Information, Resources, Systems, Thinking Skills

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Math, Art

Document F

SUGGESTIONS FOR A NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS

Instructions to Student: A newsletter is a good way to communicate with parents of children enrolled in a child care center. Using the suggestions given below as a guide, design a newsletter for parents. Work with other students to plan, write, edit, layout, print, and distribute the newsletter.

Topics could include:

Activities to Do at Home

Hints for Guidance and Discipline

Noteworthy News

Legislative Issues Impacting Child Care

Honors and Accolades

Parent Association Information

Facility Needs

Announcements

SCANS: Basic Skills, Information, Interpersonal Skills, Personal Qualities, Resources, Technology, Thinking Skills

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS: Computer Technology, Language Arts

Recommendations for Implementation

The portfolio model should be evaluated by conducting field tests in selected C&TE programs. During the field tests, procedures for evaluating portfolio items need to be established. Data from field test teachers and students should be collected and analyzed to determine usability and effectiveness of the model. A manual should be developed to assist teachers in using the model.

Inservice education needs to be provided for teachers in preparation for statewide implementation of the portfolio as a means of authentic assessment in Career and Technology Education. Teachers who participate in the field tests could be utilized in a "train-the-trainer" format to provide preparation for other teachers. Inservice education might take place at regularly scheduled professional improvement conferences for C&TE teachers. Other potential methods of providing inservice education for teachers include instructional video tape, interactive video conference, CD-ROM and CD-I.

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Appendix A
Focus Group Participants

Child Care

LUBBOCK PARTICIPANTS

Maye Constancio
Maye's Child Development Center

Jackie Driskill
Texas Tech University CDRC

Lori George
KinderCare # 120

Chris Vichick Hendrix
Early Learning Centers

Marge Hopper
Methodist Hospital Child Care Center

Cheryl Krenek
Westminster Presbyterian Preschool

Sandra McDonald
Early Learning Centers of Lubbock

Kathy O'Guinn
Highland Baptist Mothers' Day Out

Brenda Roach
KinderCare Learning Center # 166

Judy Rostad
Texas Tech Child Development Center

Valerie SoRelle
Early Odyssey Developmental School

Sharon Zumwalt
Early Childhood Learning Center of
Indiana Avenue Baptist Church

AUSTIN PARTICIPANTS

Doreen Bohrer
Bethany Lutheran Child Care Center

Nira Changwatchai
Open Door South

Rozlyn Foster
First United Methodist Preschool

Janie Hilliard
Kid Country

Mikki Jensen
Westlake Methodist Preschool

Rhonda Paver
Stepping Stone Schools

Elaine Rayburn
Westlake Hills Presbyterian Preschool

Gale Spear
Austin Community College Children's
School

June Yeatman
Austin Community Nursery Schools

Horticulture

LUBBOCK PARTICIPANTS

Charles Britton
Wolfe Nursery

Matt Kinney
Kinco Landscape Services, Inc.

Nick Tacquard
Texas Horticultural Services

Bob Covington
Covington Landscapes

Larry Best
Holland Gardens

Alex Scarborough
Tom's Tree Place

AUSTIN PARTICIPANTS

Russell Daigle
Callahan's General Store, Inc.

Cory Smith
Evergreen Landscape, Inc.

Robbie Will
Native Texas Nursery, Inc.

Wayne Redd
Redd's Landscaping, Inc.

David Starks
Greenscape Garden Center

Appendix B
Employability Skills
And
Child Care Competencies

Employability Skills (Top Rated by Industry Representatives in Year One)

1. **Personal Qualities**
   - Responsibility
   - Integrity/Honesty

2. **Basic Skills**
   - Listening
   - Reading
   - Writing
   - Speaking

3. **Thinking Skills**
   - Problem Solving
   - Knowing How to Learn

4. **Interpersonal Skills**
   - Participates as Team Member
   - Server Clients/Customers

5. **Resources**
   - Manages Time
   - Manages Material/Facilities

6. **Information**
   - Acquires/Evaluates
   - Interprets/Communicates

7. **Systems**
   - Monitors/Corrects Performance
   - Understands Systems

8. **Technology**
   - Applies Technology to Task
   - Selects Technology
   - Maintains/Trouble-shoots Equipment

Child Care Competencies (Plus An Example of One Subcompetency)

Professionalism
Practice the characteristics of an early childhood education professional.

Program Management
Assist with management procedures and policies.

Curriculum
Plan and teach a developmentally appropriate unit study for young children.

Human Growth
Plan age appropriate learning environments for children.

Guidance
Practice components of effective communication with children.

Family & Community
Plan communication strategies to strengthen parent/child care provider relationships.

Safety, Health & Nutrition
Apply safety rules and procedures in a child care setting.

Appendix C
Additional Comments of Child Care Focus Groups

The comments in the following table were mentioned in only one of the focus groups and did not contribute to a common theme. The comments are listed to aid in developing a localized career portfolio for students in C&TE.

Additional Comments of Child Care Focus Groups

Categories	Participant Comments
Application Solicitation	Word of mouth
	Phone inquiries
	Notices at housing project
	Applications on file
	Network with directors of other centers
	Hiring incentive within staff
	Announcements in university classes
	Job bank at resource center
	Newsletter advertisements
	Church billboard announcements
Application/ Interview Process	One to five page application
	Class schedule, or hours available
	Records
	Informal interview
	Talk about experience
	Check references
	Review aptitude assessment
	Ask what applicant enjoys about children
	Job history, previous employment
	Education, training
	Felony statements
	Written scenario question (Guidance, parent interaction, career goals and plans)
	Oral scenario question (Age appropriate activities)
	Philosophy
	Questions related to co-workers
	Five year goals
	Willingness to sign a contract for a year
	Memorable childhood incident
	Volunteer experience
	Informal conversation
	Formal interview by personnel board (in some facilities)
	Personal interests and hobbies
	Questions related to church site

	Appropriateness of dress
Personal Qualities	Positive role model
	Open to learning new ways
	Honesty
	Able to view the whole room
	Compatible with facility
	Awareness of supervision preference
	Ideal work environment concept
	Stability
	Responsibility
	Neatness (organization)
	Curiosity
	Articulation
	Confidence shown, smiling, making eye contact
	Personal maturity
	Professionalism
	Understanding of why applicant is there
	Playfulness with children
	Compassion
	Ability to integrate a diverse cultural heritage into the classroom
	Cultural sensitivity
	Fairness in dealing with children
	Concern for personal hygiene and health
	Outside interests and talents
	Well-rounded individual
Technical, Job-Specific Skills	Provides employment history
	Uses computers
	Works within the system
	Knows strengths and weaknesses
	Helps others
	Plays roles
	Performs evaluations (self, curriculum co-workers)
	Prepares lesson plans
	Develops curriculum
	Schedules activities
	Manages time
	Understands the environment
	Plans learning centers
	Plans inside and outside activities
	Plans quiet activities
	Conducts transitions
	Maintains visual contact with the whole room
	Supervises children
	Maintains mental alertness
	Uses common sense
	Knows children's literature

Disciplines children
Continues education
Develops professionalism and a sense of service
Maintains a code of ethics
Communicates orally
Aligns philosophically with facility policies
Writes notes to parents
Writes incident reports
Handles the job effectively
Has crime-free record
Reliable
Works with special groups
Works with special needs children
Understands non-profit status
Shares vision and goals
Works as a member of a team

Evaluation of Skills During Hiring Process

Volunteers for 6-8 weeks on a part-time basis
Attends second on-site interview
Shadows a co-worker
Handles emergencies
Provides feedback from parents
Completes oral and written scenarios
Provides past job history
Participates in educational training
Provides reason for leaving past employer
Describes atmosphere of last facility
Earns continuing education certificates
Depends on director intuition
Checks central clearinghouse for background training hours

Portfolio Contents

Children's creative work
Video
Classroom album
Last employer evaluation
Attendance record
Variety of items
Certificates: CPR, First Aid
Curriculum: Plan, implement, evaluate
Experience in teaching: swimming, dance, etc.
Interests
Letters from parents
Part-time and volunteer work
Classroom floor plan
Discipline management plan
Observations and perceptions of children
Parent conference video
Parent evaluation

Parent monthly newsletter
Philosophy of education
Daily and weekly menus
Recipes for center
Flyer for special event
Completion of HECE
Curriculum components of HECE
Competency check list with research based ratings/rubrics
Familiarity with Minimum Standards
Daily schedule adherence
Components of good classroom environment
Floor plan arrangements/designs
Age level expectations
Hand washing, diapering procedures
Presentation of a lesson
Products of the lesson created by children
Video taped lesson and activities
Written information for problem solving scenarios
Assignments completed over time
Evidence of Minimum Standards review
Accreditation procedure for CDA begun
Awards and recognition
Conventional interaction in society
Standardized steps leading to mastery certification rating
Basic forms competency (W-2)
Description of course
Language arts - appreciation of reading and love of works
Children's literature reviews
Science and social studies information for centers
Fine arts - band, drama

Use of Certificates of Mastery

Experience dealing with children
Attitude that fosters increased responsibility
Relevant experiential learning
Related training experiences - babysitting training
Openness to learning
Content and time spent to cover topics
Course description

Most Important Items to Include in a Portfolio

Letters from co-workers and parents
Workshop certificates
Continuing education hours
Extra curricular activities
Other interests
Lesson plan with evaluation of implementation
Documented competency check list with rating
Certificate of mastery
Information cover sheet

Knowledge of NAEYC and Minimum Standards
Proof of education, training
Statement of self-reflection, self perception
Personal information
Interaction abilities

Appendix D
Additional Comments of Horticulture Focus Groups

The comments in the following table were mentioned in only one of the focus groups and did not contribute to a common theme. The comments are listed to aid in developing a localized career portfolio for students in C&TE.

Additional Comments of Horticulture Focus Groups

Categories	Participant Comments
Application Solicitation	Missionaries for refugees and the homeless Small-town newspapers Would like to use cooperative learning with schools
Application/ Interview Process	Driver's license, phone number, and name Image of company is considered Continual follow-up of application is good Interview on the spot Interview after application review
Personal Qualities	Good manners Leadership abilities Able to complete tasks Sincere Care for themselves, equipment, and customers Someone you would invite in your home Retail desires: attractiveness Personable, forward Quick learners Signs of good health "Snap" motivation Process information Motivated Basic hygiene Appropriate dress Ambition Responsible
Technical/Job-Specific Skills	Farm backgrounds: already have work ethics, better Communication skills, understand time schedules, and care about equipment Communication skills required for retail but experience may hinder new sales methods Spanish speaking Information is readily available and abundant

	Skills in math, science, and language arts along with personality will move fast into a leadership position
Evaluation of Skills During Hiring Process	Ask chemical names Intuitiveness References rarely used No experience necessary Any facet of horticultural experience is beneficial
Portfolio Content	Horticultural content not important; want well-rounded applicants Square footage problem to demonstrate math State applicators license Chemical applicators exam Advertisement from advertising class Report from technical writing Transcript stating courses taken Completed application in English Evidence of safety training Recommendations from teachers Any additional background information Interests Willingness to go the extra mile List organizations, activities, and clubs Describe part-time jobs Cooperative work experiences Objectives or outline of specialized classes Logos for accredited programs employers could recognize and know that certain criteria have been met
Use of Certificates of Mastery	Sounds like degrees on television Good it with an accredited industry organization Extension's Master Gardener not geared for high school students Safety certificates Workers Protection Standards course completed helpful American Landscape Contractors Association awards for "Field Day" winners
Effects of Portfolios	May limit actual capabilities when they are not all demonstrated Not a magic key "Doesn't tell me if someone can dig a hole" It might say that the person is looking for work not being offered. Good when application is left before speaking with manager Can provide concrete evidence of abilities Could provide helpful assistance with bad interviews

Good portfolios could help promote a school program

Most Important Items to Include in a Portfolio

Driver's license with no tickets
Any desires to be in the field
Organizations
Course curriculum
Special projects
Diaries of projects
Cooperative, internships, or practical hands-on experience
Field trips